

FY2005 Performance Summary

Now in its fifth year of implementation, the National Fire Plan (NFP) represents a long-term commitment and investment that is helping to protect communities, natural resources, and, most importantly, the lives of firefighters and the public. This long-term commitment is shared among federal agencies, states, local governments, tribes, and interested publics. Collaboration, accountability, and priority setting are the guiding principles that will ensure the continued success of the NFP.

Hazardous fuels reduction goals under the National Fire Plan can now be expedited through the use of provisions under the Healthy Forests Initiative (HFI) and the Healthy Forests Restoration Act (HFRA). Significant progress has been made through the use of these provisions to reduce hazardous fuels and improve land conditions. In Fiscal Year 2005, Federal Agencies conducted over 2,300 projects using the HFI and HFRA authorities on 329,000 acres. Emphasis on collaboration and coordination are at the very core of the tremendous success realized through the five years of implementation of the NFP and the early stages of the HFI and the HFRA.

Long Term Strategy, Long Term Implementation Plan – Following the May 2002 signing of the document entitled “A Collaborative Approach for Reducing Wildland Fire Risks to Communities and the Environment,” and the subsequent approval of its implementation plan, significant progress has been made in tackling the complex problems of wildland fire. Between May of 2002 and December 2005, 57%, or 96 of the 168 actions items set forth in the plan, were completed. During 2005, Task Groups composed of stakeholders and agency representatives have reviewed past and current tasks, actions, and performance measures and have suggested updates. A summary of the funding appropriated to implement National Fire Plan goals and objectives is included below:

Summary of Appropriated Funding for the National Fire Plan*

Department of Agriculture and Department of the Interior, FY 2000-2005

(Dollars in thousands)

Agency	FY 2000	FY 2001	FY 2002	FY 2003^	FY 2004	FY 2005
USDA Forest Service	\$645,125	\$1,487,629	\$1,354,349	\$2,289,968	\$1,647,816	\$2,167,324
Department of the Interior	\$490,957	\$977,099	\$678,421	\$875,152	\$685,177	\$883,593
NFP Total	\$1,136,082	\$2,464,728	\$2,032,070	\$3,129,120	\$2,396,993	\$3,050,917

*Funding levels do not include emergency suppression contingency funds.

^2003 figures include repayment for fire suppression costs.

Increased Accountability

The Wildland Fire Leadership Council functions to ensure that Federal Wildland fire policy is carried out in a unified, seamless manner. The Council meets twice a year to address numerous management activities. Consistent with the policies and actions contained within the 2007 President's Budget, the Council is dedicated to achieving consistent implementation of the goals, actions, and policies of the National Fire Plan, the 10-year Comprehensive Strategy Implementation Plan, the Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy, the Presidents Healthy Forests Initiative, and the Healthy Forests Restoration Act.

Increased Contracting and Jobs

Both the Department of the Interior and the Forest Service have established objectives to significantly increase the level of funds for contracting of hazardous fuels projects, emergency stabilization and rehabilitation, and firefighting preparedness and suppression. The five wildland firefighting agencies initiated approximately \$140 million in contractual actions and awarded forty-four stewardship contracts in FY 2005, treating 35,478 acres.

FY 2005 Selected Accomplishments

Firefighting Preparedness - Provides the resources and infrastructure necessary to conduct fire and aviation management activities. Accomplishments include:

- Conducted a nationwide effort to update the fire management plans on every land management unit.
- Achieved a 98% success rate at containing all fires before they could become large and costly to suppress.
- Successfully deployed an aerial firefighting fleet of helitankers and large fixed-wing aircraft validated for use as airtankers in response to safety concerns raised by the National Transportation Safety Board.
- Hired, maintained, and trained a wildland fire management workforce of 14,798 personnel.
- Provided a firefighting fleet of 2,074 engines, dozers and plows, water/foam tenders, and 250 aircraft.
- Continued construction and maintenance on 69 facilities projects totaling \$19,685.75. Projects included crew quarters, air tankers, air tanker bases, helibases, offices, and fire stations.
- Implementation of the Interagency Fire Program Management (IFPM) qualifications continues for key management positions have been adopted by the USDA Forest Service and four Department of Interior agencies. Additional workforce analytical tools and data are being added to the system that will continue to enhance its value in identifying a number of performance measures.

Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation - Stabilization efforts focus on addressing post-fire emergency situations, such as erosion and possible floods. Rehabilitation efforts focus on improving lands that are unlikely to recover naturally from the effects of wildfires. Accomplishments include:

- Rehabilitated and restored burned areas through reforestation, seeding, road and trail restoration, invasive plant treatment, heritage site restoration, grazing management, insect and disease treatment watershed restoration, and restoration of streams, roads, and trails. These included new projects from fires in 2005 and a continuation of project work begun in FY 2001 and 2002.
- National Fire Plan funding supported 262 rehabilitation projects in 13 states, treating 254,985 acres and performing more than 900 miles of trail reconstruction, roadwork, riparian enhancement, fencing, and boundary line location.
- Continued the Interagency Program to Supply and Manage Native Plant Materials, a long-term strategy to improve nursery and plant material center infrastructure, monitoring of restoration effects, and public/private partnerships.
- Continued to reforest burned areas throughout a 5-year cost-share agreement with American Forests for Wildfire ReLeaf.
- Developed a strategy with the Department of the Interior to establish monitoring protocols to evaluate the effectiveness of post fire treatments.

Hazardous Fuels Reduction – Using prescribed fire, mechanical thinning, grazing, or a combination of these methods, a record amount of federal and adjacent land was made less prone to the impacts of wildfire. Accomplishments include:

- Over 2.93 million acres of federal land and adjacent lands were treated, over 2.44 million acres of which were in wildland urban interface (WUI) areas.
- 1.65 million acres were treated by mechanical means; 2.36 million acres were treated with prescribed fire.
- 489,000 acres were treated through Wildland Fire Use (WFU).
- Of the total acres treated, 1.41 million acres were treated for other reasons, and reduced fuels levels as a secondary benefit.

Community Assistance – Community assistance programs focus on building state and community capacity to develop and implement citizen-driven solutions that will lessen local vulnerability to risks associated with wildland fires. The National Fire Plan did not provide funding for Economic Action Programs. However, EAP coordinators were able to:

- Increased firefighting capacity by providing technical assistance, training, supplies, and equipment to nearly 11,000 small rural communities through Rural Fire Assistance (DOI) and Volunteer Fire Assistance (USDA Forest Service)

- Provided more than \$40 million for technical and financial assistance to States to enhance firefighting capacity at the State and local level.
- Supported the organization of 2,072 new fire departments with Volunteer Fire Assistance funds
- Entered into cooperative agreements with many rural volunteer fire departments for the purpose of protection of both communities and natural resources.
- Partnered with the National Fire Protection Association, State, Federal and nonprofit partners to encourage community responsibility for hazard mitigation through land use planning, building codes, landscaping codes, zoning, and community protection planning through Firewise Communities Program.
- Leveraged more than \$4.8 million from local communities in hazard mitigation efforts and engaged more than 10,000 individuals from 1,080 communities in 47 states in workshops through the Firewise Community Program since 1999.

Research – Three different organizations provide research for federal wildland fire management, including the Joint Fire Science Program (JSP), Forest Service Research and Development, and the US Geological Survey. Accomplishments include:

- Forest Service research teams continued to study the various aspects of wildland fire management including firefighter and public safety, fire weather and behavior, smoke dispersion, and post fire susceptibility to invasive species with support from NFP funding.
- Initiated the Encyclopedia of Southern Fire Science, a project to synthesize a large body of fire science into a fully linked and searchable hypertext system via the internet.
- JSP funded 56 new research projects in support of hazardous fuels reduction, post-fire rehabilitation, and smoke management. Recommendations generated from these studies have already been incorporated into the incident response pocket guide and current wildland firefighting training curriculum.
- Examples of tools generated by Forest Service and JFSP research teams include integrated fire and weather maps to generate 3-12 month fire forecasts; imagery-based, burn-severity maps used by Burned Area Emergency Response teams; and a fiberboard structural product made from low- or no-value material obtained from hazardous fuels treatments.
- Forest Service research teams are currently conducting 11 silvicultural assessments. The teams are studying a diverse range of issues. Studies range from Gypsy Moth and Oak Decline on the Daniel Boone National Forest, the Hemlock Woolly Adelgid on the Allegheny National Forest, to Stand and Landscape Visualization Systems and Remote Sensing of Forest Vegetation Structure. A summary of on-going projects can be viewed at www.healthyforest.gov.